

**Amendments to the Claims**

Prior to substantive examination, please amend the claims as follows:

1-2. (canceled)

3 (original). A fiber blend comprising (A) an elastic fiber with a core/sheath construction, the elastic fiber comprising at least two polymers, the core comprising a thermoplastic elastomer and the sheath comprising a homogeneously branched, ethylene polymer, the sheath polymer having a gel content of less than 30 wt %, and (B) at least one inelastic fiber.

4 (original). The fiber blend of Claim 3 in which the inelastic fiber is at least one of a cellulosic fiber, wool, silk and a silicate fiber.

5 (original). The fiber blend of Claim 3 in which the fiber of (A) is melt bonded to the fiber of (B).

6 (original). A fabricated article comprising the fiber blend of Claim 3.

7 (original). A method of separating cellulosic fibers from one another, the method comprising treating the cellulosic fibers with a quaternary ammonium compound and then subjecting the treated fibers to agitation.

8 (original). A method of separating elastic fibers from one another, the method comprising subjecting the elastic fibers to agitation in an aqueous media comprising a surfactant.

9 (original). A method of separating elastic fibers from one another, the method comprising subjecting the elastic fibers to high intensity air mixing.